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Sen. Stamas receives ‘Legislator of the Year’ award

LANSING – State Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland, was recently recognized by the Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan at the group’s annual conference “SpringFest” in Frankenmuth.

Stamas was named a “Michigan 2005 Legislator of the Year” for excellence in his legislative work affecting members of the bleeding disorders community.

“Receiving this award is a distinct honor,” Stamas said. “I am truly humbled to be selected.”

In an attempt to save \$4.6 million in general fund money, a proposal was made to eliminate Children’s Special Health Care Services coverage for adults 21 or older with hemophilia and cystic fibrosis. The coverage helps pay for health care costs not covered by insurance.

As vice chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee and chair of the Department of Community Health Appropriations Subcommittee, Stamas was able to fully restore the funding for the Children’s Special Health Care Services in the 2006 fiscal year budget.

“Eliminating funding for this greatly needed insurance would not only have negatively affected the lives of people living with hemophilia and cystic fibrosis, it actually could have ended up costing the state more in Medicaid expenses than the proposed savings,” Stamas said. “We listened to testimony from a large group of concerned citizens about the physical and economic hardships they face. Nothing about the proposal to cut the funding made sense – restoring the funding was simply the right thing to do.”

HFM President Shelley Gerson said: “The people of the state of Michigan are indeed fortunate to have a legislator like Tony Stamas serving in Lansing. He has transcended party lines to implement important public policy affecting the unique needs of the bleeding disorders community in Michigan.”

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Editor’s note: A photo of Sen. Stamas receiving the award from Ivan C. Harner, executive and regional director of the Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan can be found on the Senate Majority Photowire at: <http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/photowire/Stamas/Stamas.htm>